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JCS PASS J-5/CDR S. WRIGHT

E.O. 12958: N/A

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SUBJECT: ANKARA MEDIA REACTION REPORT

FRIDAY, AUGUST 25, 2006

In Today's Papers

Historic Reforms in the Turkish Armed Forces

All papers report that the Turkish military will undergo a major restructuring. In line with the proposed new structure, two army commands will be abolished and the Land Force, Naval Force and Air Force commands will be united under the General Staff. Under the plan, the Aegean Army and the 3rd Army will be abolished and the military will have two army commands, the 1st Army, stationed in Istanbul and the 2nd Army to be stationed in Malatya. Under the new structure, force commanders will become deputies to the Chief of General Staff. Outgoing Chief of General Staff Hilmi Ozkok, reportedly, designed the plan - a plan on which he started to work while he was commander of the Land Forces.

Southern Cyprus to Host UNIFIL Base

Sabah, Vatan: Greek Cypriot Foreign Minister George Lillikas said yesterday that the UN will use Nicosia, Cyprus as a logistics hub to facilitate the speedy deployment of peacekeepers to Lebanon. While some sources say that the center will serve as transit point for the movement of troops that will join UNIFIL in Lebanon, other sources say that the center will handle only administrative issues.

Oktay Eksi writing in the mass appeal Hurriyet urges Turkey to carefully evaluate the role of the UNIFIL forces before committing troops: "A cautious attitude on sending troops to Lebanon is the right approach. The unit to be sent to Lebanon will serve in a risky region and might have to use arms. Given the conditions there, it is unrealistic to claim that there will be no use of weapons. The definition of the Turkish force's duty is very important because Turkish troops should not assume the duty of finishing what Israel started since this will only fuel animosity toward Turkey. Sending troops to Lebanon is not against Turkish interests as long as the mission is well-defined and it will help Turkey to further increase respectability in the region."

Also urging caution, Hasan Mesut Hazar writing from Washington for the conservative-nationalist *Turkiye*, argues that if the role of the forces is other than humanitarian "more human tragedy" will be inevitable: "Turkey is right not to find the current UN resolution satisfactory. There is still some ambiguity about the international force's duties. In the past, from Cyprus to Africa, from Iraq to Israel-Palestine, the UN failed to solve the problems. The double standards used during the deciding stage of the resolutions and the implementation of these resolutions created a dysfunctional UN. Therefore, it is appropriate for Turkey to approach the mission in Lebanon cautiously. If the peacekeeping force in Lebanon becomes engaged in fighting instead of working for humanitarian purposes, more human tragedy in the Middle East will be inevitable."

Cross-Border Operations against PKK

Cumhuriyet, *Zaman*: *Cumhuriyet* reports that Turkey increased pressure on the Iraqi government to eliminate the PKK in Northern Iraq. The Turkish Ambassador to Baghdad, Unal Cevikoz, has met Iraqi Foreign Minister Hoshyar Zebari to reiterate Turkish demands on the issue. Zebari and Cevikoz discussed moves for the elimination of the PKK and for handing over top PKK militants to Turkey. Zebari submitted Turkish requests for cross-border operations against the PKK to Kurdish leaders Barzani and Talabani, but they both rejected the Turkish request. Meanwhile, *Zaman* reports that Turkish F-16 jets from the Second Tactical Air Force Command at Diyarbakir carried out bomb attacks against the Kani Massi and Snaht regions of "South Kurdistan" in northern Iraq.

Lockheed Martin Offers Turkey Advanced Patriot Missile System

Aksam reports that American company Lockheed Martin offered to sell Turkey the PAC-3 missile defense system, an upgraded version of Patriot defense missiles. Turkey's Defense Industry

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Undersecretariat is expected to release soon a tender for foreign companies interested in the program for medium range missile defense systems.

Editorial Opinion: "Turkish Self-Confidence and Syrian Double Talk" Commenting in the English language *The New Anatolian*, Cengiz Candar warns that Syrian officials should not be trusted: "What is annoyingly cynical is Bashar Assad's concern for Lebanese sovereignty which has been trampled over for more than two decades by Syria. Syria still does not recognize Lebanon as a sovereign nation and does not have any diplomatic relations with it. Lebanese sovereignty for Bashar's regime is synonymous for 'Syrian freedom of action in Lebanon' and the unimpeded right of Syria to arm Hezbollah. That is why he sees the deployment of UN troops along the Lebanese-Syrian border as a hostile act against Syria. As long as Turkish officials are not naive enough to believe everything that they hear (and why) in Damascus and as long as they are able to translate Syrian double talk, there is no problem."

TV Highlights

NTV (8 a.m.)

Domestic News

Q Public Sector Union KESK withdraws from collective bargaining talks with the government

Q Outgoing Chief of General Staff Hilmi Ozkok bid farewell to Prime Minister Erdogan

Q Five PKK terrorists give up themselves to the security forces in Sirnak

International News

Q In a letter to the troops, Israeli army Chief of Staff Dan Halutz has acknowledged for the first time that there were shortcomings in the military's performance during the recent fight against Hezbollah.

Q Syrian President Bashar Assad has warned that a deployment of international troops along Lebanon's border with Syria would be a

hostile act.

Q Astronomers downsize solar system from nine planets to eight.
Pluto loses its planetary status.

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